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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	AID-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	DS-00
	EB-01	EUR-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	IO-19
	LAB-04	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01	SIL-00	SNP-00	SP-00
	SR-00	SS-00	STR-17	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	ASDS-01
	RPE-00	/086W					

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5836
INFO ARA COLLECTIVE
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
AMEMBASSY MADRID
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 12562

E.O.12356: DECL: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, ASEC, MARR, PHUM, VE
SUBJECT: GOV MOVES AGAINST CIVILIANS INVOLVED IN NOVEMBER
27 COUP ATTEMPT

REF: CARACAS 12499

1. (U) SUMMARY: THE GOV HAS ASSERTED THAT SEVERAL
LEFTIST, GUERRILLA GROUPS WERE THE PRINCIPAL ALLIES OF THE
MILITARY "GOLPISTAS" WHO ENGINEERED THE FAILED NOV. 27
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COUP ATTEMPT. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE REBELLION,
AUTHORITIES ARE MOVING TO DETAIN AND OR INTERROGATE THE
CIVILIAN COLLABORATORS OF THE MILITARY REBELS. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) IN THEIR COMMENTS ON THE NOVEMBER 27 COUP
ATTEMPT, PRESIDENT PEREZ AND OTHER GOV OFFICIALS HAVE
EMPHASIZED THAT THOSE INVOLVED IN THE PLOT WERE A SMALL
SEGMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES -- PRINCIPALLY IN THE AIR
FORCE -- ASSOCIATED WITH THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTIONARY
MOVEMENT 200 (MBR-200), AND OLD-LINE, RADICAL LEFTIST
ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE GRUPO TERCER MUNDO (ALSO KNOWN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 30 NOV 2017
DATE/CASE ID: 08 AUG 2006 200503206

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AS TERCER CAMINO) AND THE BANDERA ROJA. STATE SECURITY POLICE (DISIP) SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED TO THE PRESS THAT MORE THAN 100 PERSONS WITH PRESUMED CONNECTIONS TO THE BANDERA ROJA, TERCER CAMINO AND MBR-200 HAVE BEEN DETAINED.

3. (U) OF THE GUERRILLA ORGANIZATIONS PRESUMABLY ALLIED WITH THE MILITARY REBELS IN THE COUP ATTEMPT, THE PRESS HAS COMMENTED MOST EXTENSIVELY ON THE ROLE OF THE BANDERA ROJA. IN PUBLIC COMMENTS, DEFENSE MINISTER GEN. JIMENEZ ACCUSED THE BANDERA ROJA (AND THE TERCER CAMINO) OF INVOLVEMENT IN NOV. 27 UPRISING; HE ALSO REVEALED THAT A SHOOT OUT BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND BANDERA ROJA OCCURRED WELL BEFORE THE COUP (ON NOVEMBER 24) NEAR THE TOWN OF CUMANACOA (SUCRE STATE), IN WHICH A PRINCIPAL LEADER OF THE GROUP, GABRIEL PUERTA APONTE, WAS KILLED (REFTEL). MOREOVER, HE ALLEGED THAT BANDERA ROJA ATTEMPTED TO ATTACK THE PROVINCIAL TOWN OF ZARAZA ON NOV. 27, BUT WAS BEATEN OFF. HOWEVER, THE MOTHER OF GABRIEL PUERTA APONTE HAS REFUTED THE ALLEGATIONS THAT HER SON HAD BEEN KILLED, BUT REFUSED TO INDICATE HIS CURRENT WHEREABOUTS. AT THE SAME

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TIME, SHE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS OF ANOTHER SON, EDER DE DIOS PUERTA APONTE. A DISIP SPOKESMAN SAID ON NOV. 30 THAT HE HAD NO CONFIRMED INFORMATION ON EITHER OF THE TWO BROTHERS.

4. (U) BACK IN EARLY OCTOBER, A CARACAS NEWSPAPER REPORTED THAT DISIP AND MILITARY INTELLIGENCE (DIM) HAD DETAINED SEVERAL MILITARY OFFICERS AND CIVILIANS ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN A CONSPIRACY TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ. THE NEWSPAPER CLAIMED BANDERA ROJA (AMONG OTHERS) WAS IMPLICATED IN THIS PLOT; HOWEVER, THE GOV OFFICIALLY DENIED THAT ANY SUCH PLOT EXISTED (SEE CARACAS 10668). ON OCTOBER 8, ANOTHER CARACAS NEWSPAPER CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ALLEGED SECRETARY GENERAL OF BANDERA ROJA, ONE JUAN FRANCISCO LOPEZ, IN WHICH LOPEZ ASSERTED THAT THE GOV WOULD SOON BE TOPPLED BY A "CIVIC-MILITARY INSURRECTION" (SEE CARACAS 10747).

5. (U) FOLLOWING THE NOV. 28 INCURSION INTO THE VENEZUELAN CENTRAL UNIVERSITY (UCV) CARACAS CAMPUS BY SECURITY FORCES SEEKING ARMS AND SUSPECTS LINKED TO THE COUP ATTEMPT, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD SAID 17 PERSONS WERE DETAINED. THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS (FCU), LUIS FIGUEROA, CHARGED THAT MANY

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MORE THAN 17 PERSONS HAD BEEN DETAINED (FIGUEROA'S APPEARANCE REFUTED REPORTS THAT HE HAD BEEN DETAINED OR KILLED DURING THE FAILED EFFORT ON NOV. 27 TO FREE FEB. 4 COUP LEADER HUGO CHAVEZ FROM HIS PRISON). AUTHORITIES ALSO SEALED OFF AND SEARCHED UNIVERSITIES IN MARACAY AND VALENCIA. NO FIGURES WERE RELEASED ON THE NUMBER OF DETAINEES, IF ANY; ARMS WERE SEIZED AT THE UCV BRANCH IN

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MARACAY.

6. (U) AMONG THE MORE WELL KNOWN FIGURES DETAINED WAS RETIRED GENERAL ALBERTO MULLER ROJAS, WHO WAS TAKEN TO DISIP HEADQUARTERS FOR QUESTIONING ON NOVEMBER 29 AND RELEASED THE NEXT DAY. A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AND COLUMNIST, MULLER HAS SERVED AS SOMETHING OF AN APOLOGIST FOR THOSE SEEKING TO JUSTIFY A MILITARY COUP AGAINST THE PEREZ GOVERNMENT (ALTHOUGH IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW ON NOVEMBER 29 HE CRITICIZED THE COUP AS AN IRRESPONSIBLE ACT OF ADVENTURISM AND A BRUTAL USE OF FORCE). IN PUBLIC REMARKS UPON HIS RELEASE, MULLER DENIED ANY CONNECTION WITH THE REBELS AND MAINTAINED HE HAS SUPPORTED ELECTIONS AS THE DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION TO THE NATION'S POLITICAL

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CRISIS.

7. (U) PRESS ON NOVEMBER 29 REPORTED THAT AUTHORITIES
WERE LOOKING FOR DOMINGO ALBERTO RANGEL BOURGOIN, A
UNIVERSITY ECONOMICS PROFESSOR WHO IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN
INTELLECTUAL ADVISOR TO THE GUERRILLA GROUPS. (HE IS ALSO
THE BROTHER OF A FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER AND THE FATHER
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OF EX-MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY BEATRICE RANGEL.) THE
DEC. 1 PRESS REPORTS THAT RANGEL MADE A STATEMENT AT DISIP
OFFICES ON NOV. 30; HE APPARENTLY WAS NOT DETAINED.

8. (U) THE GOV HAS ESPECIALLY CRITICIZED THE ROLE OF
ELDERLY WRITER AND INTELLECTUAL ARTURO USLAR PIETRI, WHO
HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF BEING THE INTELLECTUAL MENTOR OF THE
REBELS. INTERIOR MINISTER PINERUA HAS ASSERTED THAT USLAR
OWES THE COUNTRY "AN ACT OF PUBLIC CONTRITION" FOR HIS
PART IN PROVIDING AN INTELLECTUAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THE
COUP ATTEMPT. USLAR HAS DEFENDED HIMSELF AS "AN ENEMY OF
COUPS."

9. (U) THE CARACAS NEWSPAPERS ALSO CARRY A VARIETY OF
REPORTS OF DETENTIONS OF ALLEGED COLLABORATORS IN OTHER
STATES. IN VARIOUS ROUNDUPS JUST OUTSIDE OF CARACAS IN
MIRANDA STATE, NATIONAL GUARD REPORTEDLY DETAINED 85
CIVILIANS OVER THE NOV. 28-29 WEEKEND, MOST OF THEM IN
LOWER CLASS "BARRIOS." AMONG THOSE ARRESTED WAS DR. TANIA

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DIAZ DE BARCIA, THE SISTER OF A MAJOR INCARCERATED IN THE YARE MILITARY PRISON FOR HIS ROLE IN THE FEBRUARY COUP. IN A BARRIO OUTSIDE VALENCIA, FIVE CIVILIANS WERE ARRESTED IN A HOUSE TOGETHER WITH THREE PRESUMED REBEL AIRMEN AND A QUANTITY OF WEAPONS.

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